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Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 67/61, the General Assembly reaffirmed the ways and means regarding confidence- and security-building measures set out in the report of the Disarmament Commission on its 1993 session, and called upon Member States to pursue those ways and means through sustained consultations and dialogue, while at the same time avoiding actions that may hinder or impair such a dialogue. Furthermore, the General Assembly urged States to comply strictly with all bilateral, regional and international agreements, including arms control and disarmament agreements, to which they are a party. The General Assembly also emphasized that the objective of confidence-building measures should be to help strengthen international peace and security and be consistent with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, and encouraged the promotion of bilateral and regional confidence-building measures, with the consent and participation of the parties concerned, to avoid conflict and prevent the unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session containing the views of Member States on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. A note verbale was sent on 28 February 2013 to all Member States requesting their views. To date, replies from the Governments of China, Cuba, Germany, Jordan, Mexico, and Ukraine have been received and are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Member States

China

[Original: English]
[31 May 2013]

China supports confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context. China has actively taken part in disarmament and non-proliferation affairs under the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum, promoting the process in this field in the Asia-Pacific region. China had been Co-Chair of the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-proliferation and Disarmament of the Asian Regional Forum from 2009 to 2011. In 2012, China took part in the fourth Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-proliferation and Disarmament of the Asian Regional Forum, held in Sydney, the first Asian Regional Forum Workshop on Space Security, held in Viet Nam, and the eleventh United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation held in the Republic of Korea, on which occasions China elaborated its policies and positions on relevant issues and held in-depth exchanges with other participants.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[3 May 2013]

Confidence-building measures are of great value as a contribution to international peace and security.

Cuba not only supports appropriate confidence-building measures at all levels but also considers it necessary to strengthen, improve and expand them because of their valuable contribution to the promotion of understanding, transparency and cooperation among States and to the enhancement of stability and security.

The adoption of regional and subregional confidence-building measures which fully respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and enjoy the consent and participation of the parties concerned can help to avoid conflict, prevent the unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities and contribute to regional stability and the achievement of development objectives, including the eradication of poverty and the protection of the environment.

Cuba reiterates that, by their voluntary nature, confidence-building measures cannot be imposed; nor are there any one-size-fits-all solutions. The success of such measures will depend to a large extent on the achievement of true consensus among the States participating in their implementation. They must be tailored to the geographical, political, social, cultural and economic conditions of each region.

Although confidence-building measures can contribute to the establishment of an enabling environment for the implementation of disarmament commitments and their verification, Cuba reiterates that such measures can in no way replace disarmament and arms control measures and the regional and subregional treaties in force in the area, and are not a prerequisite for their implementation.

The existence of 19,000 nuclear weapons and the extremely high level of world military expenditure, which reached $1.75 trillion in 2012, are factors which create a climate of mistrust and legitimate international concern.

At least half of current military expenditure should be allocated to the establishment of a fund administered by the United Nations to meet the economic and social development requirements of countries in need.

In the context of confidence-building measures, Cuba stresses the significant responsibility of States with greater military capacity.

Another step towards a system of confidence-building measures could be the qualitative and quantitative limitation of the armed forces of all countries in the hemisphere, while respecting the sovereign right of each nation to have armed forces capable of defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity and maintaining domestic order.

To the extent possible, and without any impact on the national security of the respective countries, measures should be taken to promote mutual understanding between the armed forces of the region and ensure greater transparency in all possible areas. States with more powerful armed forces should guarantee that they will not attack smaller countries.

The above will be possible to the extent that States have the necessary armed forces to guarantee their national sovereignty and consider that there is no danger of military attack, political pressure or economic coercion.

Cuba considers that, for the establishment of confidence-building measures in the military sphere, tensions in the region or subregion concerned have to be reduced and cooperation must be enhanced so that any situation, however complicated it may be, can be resolved through negotiation. For example, in the area of border monitoring, an appropriate system of communication between contiguous States is needed in order to avoid possible sources of conflict, taking into account the proximity of States and the confluence of ships, aircraft and other units in adjacent areas.

Under certain minimum conditions for reducing tension, measures such as the following can be implemented:

1. Provide advance notice of all exercises and manoeuvres that take place in the region, especially those involving the movement of forces and equipment by sea and by air in areas close to other countries.

2. Adopt measures for the gradual reduction of forces and equipment involved in such exercises; reduce live-fire activities with long-range weapons systems that could hit unintended targets at sea, on land or in the air.

3. Provide notification of airspace and sea space reservations for the purposes of such exercises or other military activities. Such notification should take place through the established channels and reach all interested parties sufficiently in advance.

4. At the time of approval of exercises and manoeuvres of a certain scale, explain their objectives, the tactical and operational issues involved and the numbers of forces participating.

5. When possible, invite military representatives from the countries of the region to participate as observers in some events or movements of these exercises.

6. Conduct the preparatory combat activities of the armed forces at a prudent distance from the coasts or borders of other countries, unless the latter are participating in those activities or give their prior consent to the party conducting them. Particularly important are aviation activities in areas close to other countries, which are a significant risk.

7. Reach agreements to ban exercises and manoeuvres in areas where there are intensive commercial, fishing, tourism, scientific research or other activities.

8. Provide advance notice of the use of warships (especially aircraft carriers and amphibious units) in areas close to other countries, in groups or in isolation.

9. Establish an advance notification system for when units of this type cross passages or straits where there is intense traffic, including the Yucatan Canal, the Florida Straits and the Windward Passage.

10. Establish limits in specific areas for the presence of nuclear-powered ships, as well as more severe restrictions for ships and aircraft with the capacity to carry nuclear arms.

11. Install hotlines between Governments and military commanders of the countries in the region so that any urgent situation that arises can be resolved in a timely manner.

12. Organize bilateral and multilateral contacts and events on a regular basis for specialized personnel in order to improve the relations between military forces in the area and to create a climate of mutual confidence in the military sphere.

13. Particularly important would be issues relating to military bases of other countries in the region. Initial measures could be taken on the status of such facilities. Advocacy efforts could be made for the withdrawal of facilities that are present against the will of Governments and peoples in the area; especially, among other factors, if they infringe the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation where they are situated.

Respect for international law, full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and international treaties, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the sovereign equality of States, respect for the sovereignty of States, non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs, refraining from the threat or use of force and cooperation among States in solving international (and regional) problems are the basis of peaceful coexistence and international security and constitute the indispensable framework for the development of truly effective confidence-building measures.

Germany

[Original: English]
[30 April 2013]

1. Introduction

The Federal Republic of Germany, referring to its 2012 contribution to the database on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms (General Assembly resolution 67/49) dated 3 December 2012, attaches great significance to confidence-building measures in disarmament and arms control, and emphasizes the importance of those measures on a regional and subregional level.

2. German participation in treaties and agreements with regard to confidence-building measures on a regional and subregional level and related activities

(a) Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe;

(b) Treaty on Open Skies;

(c) Vienna Document;

(d) Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security;

(e) General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Accords), Annex 1-B;

(f) OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons;

(g) OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition;

(h) OSCE Document on Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers.

3. Other activities by Germany (Conferences and Seminars) with regard to confidence-building measures in 2012 (list is not exhaustive)

Germany also pays particular attention to regional and subregional dialogue with regard to issues relating to confidence-building measures, landmines and small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. Activities in 2012 included:

- Continued support to training courses and seminars at the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Center (RACVIAC) in Zagreb
- Germany actively contributes to the OSCE Informal Working Group established by OSCE Permanent Council Decision 1039 to build consensus on first confidence-building measures for cyberspace
- Continued support to training courses at the NATO School in the field of small arms and light weapons/conventional ammunition
- Continued support to training courses and seminars in Tadzhikistan in the field of small arms and light weapons/conventional ammunition

(For all further details, see Germany's 2012 report: Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms (General Assembly resolution 67/49) issued on 30 April 2013.)

Germany would consider it natural that States having initiated or sponsored a General Assembly resolution including the request of the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the given subject would report accordingly in a timely and comprehensive manner to the Secretary-General.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[24 May 2013]

1. The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan supports the efforts of the United Nations aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels, in order to foster peace and security throughout the world. Jordan has consistently supported all General Assembly resolutions relating to peace, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, confidence-building measures and measures to enhance transparency at all levels, and disarmament and arms control, in order to avoid sowing mistrust among the States of the region, as that could potentially lead to armed conflicts in the future. Jordan encourages the peaceful resolution of conflicts through negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means chosen by the parties.

2. Jordan abides by all Security Council resolutions concerning weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, proliferation and the use of force against civilians and all relevant previous resolutions concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including resolution 1540 (2004), which is regarded as the basis for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the regional and global levels. It also urges other States to respect United Nations resolutions and bilateral, regional and international instruments.

3. Jordan has a policy of complying with instruments relating to the control of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, which has a direct effect on its security policy at the regional and international levels. The country is party to several international instruments and supports many initiatives concerning conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. It also supports international efforts to prevent the trade in small arms and light weapons, in order to promote confidence and cooperation as well as establish peace and security among the States of the region and the world. Following are some of the instruments to which Jordan is party:

- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
- The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction
- The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
- The Proliferation Security Initiative.

4. Jordan is aware that terrorism constitutes a major threat to global peace and security. The Jordanian Government believes in the importance of combating terrorism in all its forms and emphasizes that terrorism has no basis in religion. In the light of the country's tolerant, rational, prudent and far-sighted stance, the defence policy of Jordan views terrorism as one of the key potential challenges to national security. Jordan has therefore adopted national legislation to combat terrorism and has acceded to all international counter-terrorism instruments and initiatives.

5. Jordan has concluded several regional and international instruments concerning military matters with a view to establishing peace and security in the region. Among the countries and organizations with which it has concluded such instruments are the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. In order to safeguard its essential security interests, the Government of Jordan therefore provides its military forces with sufficient equipment and weapons required to defend Jordan's territory, but not for the purpose of attacking other States. The Jordanian armed forces also participate in United Nations operations to establish peace, security and stability in all parts of the world, and Jordan is considered to be one of the leading troop-contributing countries.

6. By maintaining strong cooperative relations with its neighbours in the region that are built on mutual interests, Jordan strives to establish security and peace in the Middle East. In 1994, Jordan concluded a peace treaty with Israel. Since that time, Jordan has been a regional leader in acceding to international instruments concerning arms control and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

with the aim of establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In 1998, Jordan signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. It subsequently launched an effort to remove all landmines along its border with Israel and established the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation in order to monitor the demining effort, ensure that by 2012 Jordan is free of all mines or explosives that can cause civilian casualties and provide assistance to landmine victims.

7. Jordan has been one of the leading countries in the region in providing humanitarian assistance at the international level and has always sought to alleviate the suffering of the peoples of the region. It has received many refugees and displaced persons from various countries, including, most recently, almost 500,000 Syrian refugees. Despite its difficult economic situation, Jordan provides them with the health and social services they require. It does so in the belief that States must cooperate and work in partnership to alleviate the suffering of peoples. Moreover, the Jordanian armed forces have provided free medical services, dispatched doctors and established field hospitals under the auspices of the United Nations as well as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Japan, Lebanon and Pakistan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Some of those hospitals are still in operation.

8. Jordan believes that confidence- and security-building measures will increase stability, peace and security and will help to promote and strengthen equality, freedom and democracy.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[24 May 2013]

Mexico is a firm defender of peace, stability and security on the continent and has therefore supported, and will continue to promote, confidence-building measures in both a regional and subregional context.

National activities

The Government of Mexico conducts activities to prevent crime and reduce violence in order to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Mexico is implementing a comprehensive strategy to combat organized crime, through which it seizes weapons, ammunition, drugs and chemical precursors, and also destroys clandestine laboratories and crops of marijuana and poppies.

In that regard, Mexico has operational procedures in place to control the manufacture, storage, transport and use of weapons and ammunition for civilian use as required for the pursuit of justice, public security, hunting, sports and residential security.

The Ministry of Defence continues, under strict security measures, to destroy obsolete confiscated weaponry, such as various types of explosives (both military and homemade) and confiscated claymore mines, as this is an effective contribution to arms control. It also retains the exclusive right to offer for sale weapons and

ammunition needed by Mexican public and private security forces, in conformity with the Federal Firearms and Explosives Act and its implementing regulations, as well as international law.

In addition, the Ministry of Defence has ongoing education and arms handover campaigns designed to reduce firearms possession by members of the public, thereby contributing to the peaceful and voluntary disarmament of civilians.

These normative measures and campaigns comply with regional and subregional commitments on confidence-building measures by regulating the import and export of firearms, ammunition and explosives of all kinds.

Bilateral activities

Mexico participates in binational commissions with Belize, Guatemala and the United States of America, through which specific activities for coordination and cooperation have been established in order to strengthen security on common borders. These activities help the Government of Mexico meet its regional and subregional commitments and contribute to confidence-building.

In the context of bilateral cooperation and confidence-building activities, the Ministry of the Navy of Mexico signed a maritime cooperation agreement on 18 June 2012 with the Ministry of Defence and the Navy of the Republic of Colombia. On 26 April 2012, the Ministry of the Navy of Mexico and the United States Coast Guard Eighth District signed an updated MEXUSGULF geographic annex as part of the Joint Contingency Plan between Mexico and the United States Regarding Pollution of the Marine Environment by Discharges of Hydrocarbons and Other Hazardous Substances.

Regional activities

In the framework of the Organization of American States (OAS), Mexico supports and implements the confidence-building measures contained in the Declaration of Santiago (1995), the Declaration of San Salvador (1998) and the Consensus of Miami (2003), all of which were endorsed in the Declaration on Security in the Americas (2003). All of these instruments laid the groundwork for confidence- and security-building measures in the inter-American system.

In this connection, Mexico has since 2009 submitted annual reports to OAS in accordance with the consolidated list of confidence- and security-building measures for reporting according to OAS resolutions (CP/CSH-1043/08 rev.1). The most recent one, entitled "Report of Mexico in accordance with the consolidated list of confidence- and security-building measures", was drafted with assistance from the Ministries of Defence and the Navy and submitted on 11 September 2012.

Mexico is party to all inter-American security agreements and conventions, contributing thereby to the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in the hemisphere. Mexico continues to participate in various hemispheric forums devoted to the discussion of the confidence- and security-building measures agreed by OAS member States.

Through the Ministry of the Navy and with the authorization of the Senate, the Government of Mexico has participated in the following naval exercises:

Rim of the Pacific Exercise, carried out off the coast of Hawaii from 29 June to 7 August 2012;

UNITAS LIII Atlantic, held in Key West, Florida, United States of America from 17 to 28 September 2012;

PASSEX, held on 16 October 2012 in Acapulco, Guerrero, with a training squadron from the Navy of the Republic of Korea; on 10 February 2013 near Cartagena, Colombia, with a squadron from the Navy of Colombia; and on 15 March 2013 near the port of Chiapas, with the Navy of France.

There are plans to participate in the following naval exercises in 2013:

UNITAS LIII Pacific, in Lima, Peru, from 14 to 25 May;

UNITAS LIII Atlantic, in Key West, Florida, United States of America, from 17 to 28 September.

Ukraine

[Original: Russian]
[31 May 2013]

Ukraine is firmly committed to a policy of comprehensive, equal and indivisible security based on cooperation and to the key role played by conventional arms control regimes and confidence- and security-building measures in ensuring stability, predictability and transparency in the military sphere. In this regard, Ukraine strictly complies with its obligations under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Treaty on Open Skies and the 2011 Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures for military forces and military activities. Moreover, Ukraine is taking additional measures at both the bilateral and regional levels to enhance confidence and transparency in the military sphere.

During its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2013, Ukraine initiated a dialogue among all its member States concerning the role of conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in the current and future European security architecture.

1. The 2011 Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures is the basis for cooperation among the States members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in respect of their military forces, armaments, military activities and defence planning.

The Government is enhancing both bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the context of regional security systems in order to establish a zone of stability and mutual confidence around Ukraine.

In accordance with chapter X ("Regional measures") of the 2011 Vienna Document, Ukraine is implementing bilateral confidence- and security-building measures with its neighbours, in addition to the measures being undertaken throughout the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ukraine is actively collaborating with Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and Belarus through the following bilateral intergovernmental agreements:

(a) Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Hungary on confidence- and security-building measures and the development of bilateral military contacts;

(b) Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Slovak Republic on additional confidence- and security-building measures;

(c) Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Poland on confidence- and security-building measures;

(d) Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on additional confidence- and security-building measures.

The agreements provide, inter alia, for prior notification of military activities, for invitations to observe exercises, and for inspections of and visits to military units.

In accordance with the agreements, each party conducts two or three confidence- and security-building measures per year in its country, in addition to the quota of inspections established in the 2011 Vienna Document.

Since the entry into force of the agreements (2001 in the case of Slovakia; 2002 in the case of Belarus and Hungary; and 2004 in the case of Poland), 140 measures have been conducted in Ukraine and elsewhere.

The annual working meetings held to assess the implementation of the agreements provide an opportunity for open dialogue to take place on the establishment of new cooperation mechanisms.

One important confidence-building step is that the parties to the agreements refrain from conducting tactical military exercises at the battalion scale and above in the vicinity of the borders with their neighbours.

Ukraine has now completed its domestic preparatory procedures for the conclusion of an agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of Romania on confidence- and security-building measures.

2. As a naval Power, and in view of the key role and special responsibility of Black Sea coastal States in ensuring security in the Black Sea, Ukraine initiated the process for the drafting and adoption of a document on naval confidence- and security-building measures in the Black Sea that has been in force since 2003. In addition to Ukraine, all the Black Sea States — Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation and Turkey — are signatories to the document.

Owing to the special characteristics of the Black Sea, this is an independent regional initiative that is unrelated to other international agreements and initiatives to which the participants are parties.

In implementation of the document, Ukraine develops naval partnerships and contacts, actively participates in annual consultations, conducts regular visits to naval bases and engages in an annual exchange of information on naval forces.

3. In order to promote naval cooperation and good-neighbourly relations among the States of the Black Sea, and to strengthen peace and stability in the region, Ukraine actively participates in another regional initiative, the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (Blackseafor) Agreement, whose participants engage in search and rescue, monitoring of maritime navigation, humanitarian assistance, environmental protection and biannual joint exercises and training.

4. Ukraine is contributing to the establishment and development of new confidence- and security-building measures through its participation in operation Black Sea Harmony and other multilateral initiatives to combat terrorism and piracy in the Mediterranean Sea and other areas of the world's oceans.

As one of the largest countries in Europe, Ukraine engages in the responsible implementation of international agreements on conventional arms control and the related bilateral and regional confidence- and security-building measures in the military sphere, and contributes to promoting confidence- and security-building in the region of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.